



## News Release

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **UDOH Reports Increase in Influenza Cases** *Vaccine Still Available Across State*

Salt Lake City, UT – Increases in the number of people diagnosed with influenza have prompted the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) to upgrade Utah's status to "local" from "sporadic activity."

To date, 59 influenza-associated hospitalizations have been reported, with 43 of those cases reported during December and January. The majority of reported cases are influenza type A and most have occurred in children less than 18 years of age. Influenza A is commonly associated with more severe disease and outbreaks.

"While Utah has not yet reached peak activity, it isn't uncommon to see influenza activity peak during January or February," says Dr. Robert Rolfs, UDOH state epidemiologist.

"Vaccination is still effective in preventing disease, especially since more cases are occurring," says Dr. Rolfs.

According to health officials, the risk of exposure to influenza increases during this time of the season because more people are traveling to Utah for winter activities. Crowded settings in restaurants and other businesses create an easy environment for spreading influenza. School-aged children are also common contributors to influenza outbreaks.

The UDOH recommends that people get vaccinated throughout the season to prevent serious illness and to keep from spreading the disease to others. All age groups, especially young children, the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions, should get an influenza vaccine, if they haven't already. Other groups, such as pregnant women, international travelers, service workers, and health care personnel should also get vaccinated.

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Influenza vaccine is still available throughout Utah. For more information, contact your health care provider, a public health clinic or the Immunization Hotline at 1-800-275-0659.

To find a flu clinic near you, please visit the UDOH Flu Vaccine Locator online at <http://www.immunize-utah.org/index.html>.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*